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DATA ON 6 FINNISH POLITICAL PARTIES

Comment This report contains basic information from Mitaan Missä Milloin 1952 on the six political parties which are currently represented in the Finnish Diet; they are presented in order of party strength as indicated by the number of the 200 Diet seats held. It should be noted that although the SKDL claims not to be a political party, it, in fact, is one. The Finnish titles of the parties and of their governing and other bodies are given because these designations vary from party to party.

Social Democratic Party

The Social Democratic Party of Finland (Suomen Sosialidemokraattinen Puolue) was founded between 17 and 20 July 1899 in Turku, Finland, as the Workers Party of Finland (Suomen Työväenpuolue). The present name was adopted between 17 and 20 August 1903.

The party's objectives are to unite those underprivileged classes of the population that perform physical labor or do creative work, such as wage earners and small farmers who earn their livelihood mainly through their own labor; to improve the political rights and protection of the oppressed and the exploited through exercise of political action and cooperation with the social democratic parties of other countries; and to work for the achievement of social reform and the rearrangement of the entire social economy on a socialist basis. To accomplish these objectives, the party carries on educational work directed at the government and society, especially the classes of society mentioned above.

The party has three governing bodies. the Party Conference (Puoluekokous), which meets every third year; the Party Council (Puolueneuvosto) of 48 members, which meets at least once a year; and the Party Committee (Puolue-toimikunta) of 12 members. The party has 15 district organizations, 174 communal organizations, and 1,587 basic organizations. It polled 480,754 popular votes in the 1951 national Diet election and currently holds 53 of the 200 seats in the Diet.

- 1 -

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Emil Skog and Aleksi Aaltonen are chairman and vice-chairman, respectively, of the Party Committee. Diet Member Väinö Leskinen is the party secretary, and Veikko Puskala is secretary for party organizations.

Party address: Paasivuorenkatu 3, B, 15, Helsinki

Agrarian Union

The Agrarian Union (Maalaisliitto) was founded at Seinäjoki, Finland, on 26 October 1906 as the Union of Finnish Agrarian People (Suomen Maalaisliitto). The present name was adopted in 1908.

The party's objectives include arousing the interest of the rural population of Finland in sociological and governmental affairs in the best interests of the nation, promoting a sense of social responsibility among these people, and uniting them into an active political party in an effort to further the cause of the country as a whole and of the agrarian sector.

The leading principles of the Agrarian program include the defense of national independence, the realization of a democratic system of government, the honoring of the rights and responsibilities of citizens as defined in the constitution, the reduction of the points of friction between groups of citizens, the utilization of labor and the physical power resources of the country in the best possible manner to improve the standard of living, and the promotion of a simple, healthy, and temperate way of life.

The party has three governing bodies: the Party Conference (Puoluekokous), which meets every other year; the Party Governing Committee (Puoluevaltuuskunta) of 30 to 50 members, which meets at least twice a year; and a Central Administration (Keskushallitus) of 13 members. The party has 33 district organizations, 109 communal organizations, and 1,250 local sections.

The Agrarian Union polled 431,613 votes in the 1951 national Diet election, and currently holds 51 seats in the Diet.

Professor V. J. Sukselainen is party chairman; Johannes Vilolainen, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, is vice-chairman; and Agricultural Engineer Martti Miettunen is party secretary.

Party address: Kalevankatu 21, Helsinki.

Finnish People's Democratic Union

The Finnish People's Democratic Union was founded in Helsinki on 1 October 1944 under the registered title Suomen Kansan Demokraattinen Liitto - Demokratiska Förbundet för Finlands Folk (Finnish and Swedish titles combined). The Finnish abbreviation is SKDL and the Swedish is DFF.

The SKDL is not a party. It is only an organization for political cooperation.

The regulations of the SKDL state that its objective is to form a tie between organizations which operate on democratic principles, to clarify and promote the democratic concept among the Finnish people, and to rally the common efforts of these organizations toward improving the economic welfare, political freedom, and cultural level of the people.

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The SKDL has three governing bodies, the Union Conference (Liittokokous), which meets every third year; the Union Council (Liittoneuvosto) of 52 members, which meets at least once a year; and the Union Committee (Liittotoimikunta) of 34 members. The SKDL has 17 district organizations, 241 communal organizations, and approximately 1,400 basic organizations. The central organizations of which the union consists include the Finnish Communist Party (SKP), the Socialist Unity Party (SYP), the Finnish Women's Democratic Union (SNDL), the Academic Socialist Society (ASS), and the Union of Finnish Comrade Corps (STL, Suomen Toverikuntien Liitto). Each member organization has its representation at each organizational echelon of the SKDL.

The SKDL polled 391,362 votes in the 1951 national Diet election and currently holds 43 seats in the Diet.

Kusti L. Kulo is chairman of the union and editor Eino Kilpi and Yrjö Murto are vice-chairmen; editor Hertta Kuusinen is general secretary.

Address of the SKDL Kaisaniemenkatu 13. B. VII, Helsinki

National Coalition

The National Coalition (Kansallinen Kokoomus) was founded on 9 December 1916 in Helsinki as the Federation of the National Coalition Party (Kansallisen Kokoomuspuolueen Keskusliitto). The name was shortened to its present form on 22 April 1950.

The objectives of the party include the preservation of national independence and of a free system of government; advancement of patriotic unity and of Finnish nationalism; strengthening of the state and of society; the preservation of values inherited from preceding generations, such as the desire to defend the homeland based on the love of liberty, religious faith, a wholesome family life, and an economic system based on free enterprise; the preservation of a sound peasant culture and the quality of thrift; the protection of the system of justice; opposition to any instigation designed to overthrow the existing system of government or of society; the strengthening of the spirit of good citizenship; respect for law and promotion of civil harmony; the promotion of national preparedness, economic independence, and the spirit of enterprise; the support of all forms of useful intellectual and physical work; and the pursuit of social reforms designed to improve the welfare of the people.

The party has three governing bodies - the Party Conference (Puoluekokous) which meets every other year; the Council (Valtuusto) of 60 members; and the Administration (Hallitus) of 12 members. The coalition has 17 district unions and 417 nationalist societies (kansallissäätiöt).

The coalition polled 264,176 votes in the 1951 national Diet election and holds 20 seats in the Diet.

Aivo Salminen is chairman of the Council and E. A. Turpa is vice-chairman; Niilo Honkala (master of philosophy) is party secretary.

Party address, Mannerheimintie 6, Helsinki

Swedish People's Party

The Swedish People's Party (Swedish name: Svenska Folkpartiet; Finnish translation Ruotsalainen kansanpuolue) was founded on 20-21 May 1906 in Helsinki.

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The objectives of the party include unifying the Swedish people of Finland on a patriotic basis to defend their position and rights; protecting and developing the Swedish element of the population of Finland and its language and culture; preserving Finnish freedom and independence; strengthening Finland's position in foreign diplomacy; defending the western concept of a just state and the democratic system of government based on law, the sacredness of the law, and the authority of the system of justice; opposing attempts to establish dictatorships and all activity which divides society; protecting the freedoms of speech, of assembly, and of the right to unite; cooperating in efforts to reduce class differences; working for economy in public affairs and for the reduction of the tax burden; improving the means for gaining a livelihood and promotion of free and sound enterprise; promoting the marketing of domestic industrial products both at home and abroad; developing the educational system to meet practical needs; and protecting the working conditions of the citizens and improving their standard of living.

The party has three governing bodies: the Party Conference, which meets once a year; the Central Administration of 51 members; and the Executive Central Administration of 21 members. The party has four district organizations and approximately 100 local sections. It polled 137,171 votes in the 1951 national Diet election, and holds 15 seats in the Diet.

Balf Törngren is party chairman and Inge Appelberg (master of philosophy) is party secretary.

Party address. Bulevardi 1, Helsinki

Finnish People's Party

The Finnish People's Party (Suomen Kansanpuolue) was founded on 1 February 1951 in Helsinki.

Party objectives. The intellectual basis for the operations of the People's Party is a constructive, unprejudiced, Finnish attitude toward world affairs, based on the Christian concept of life, on republican and social-welfare points of view, and on individual freedom and absolute democracy. The more immediate objective of the party is to improve the solidarity of the nation and protect the independence of the republic. The party seeks to reduce the points of friction between groups of citizens and to strengthen the spirit of national unity. The party stresses the dignity of the individual, the significance of personal responsibility and of social security; the party categorically opposes collectivism and considers it imperative that the public affairs, as well as the social and economic life, of the country be founded on liberty based on democracy and legal principles. The party seeks to unite the middle classes in constructive effort for the good of society and the nation.

The party has three governing bodies - the Party Conference (Puoluekokous) which meets once a year; the Party Council (Puoluevaltuusto) of 68 members which meets at least twice a year; and the Party Committee (Puoluehoimikunta) of 23 members. The party has 14 district unions and 111 local sections.

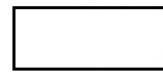
The People's Party polled 102,911 votes in the 1951 national Diet election, and holds ten seats in the Diet.

- 4 -

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Professor Eino Saari is party chairman, and Professor Esa Kaitila and Communal Mayor H. A. Kannisto are vice-chairmen. Editor Osmo Kupiainen is party secretary.

Party address: Pohjoinen Esplanadikatu 37. A., Helsinki

Other political groups too small to hold representation in the Diet polled 14,789 votes in the 1951 election. A total of 1,812,817 votes were cast out of an over-all population of 4,028,910 (census of 1950).

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- 5 -

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